



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Virgin Island Police Officers and Virgin Islands Port Authority Officer,
Guilty of RICO and Related Charges

After a two-week trial, a federal jury on St. Thomas convicted Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) Officers Enid Edwards and Francis Brooks, along with Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA) Officer Bill John-Baptiste, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agent in Charge Luis Fraticelli, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Agent in Charge Javier F. Pena, Acting United States Marshal Reginald Bradshaw, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division (IRS CID) Special Agent in Charge Daniel W. Auer, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) Inspector in Charge Thomas Boyle, and Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) Commissioner Novelle Francis announced today.

Edwards and Brooks were convicted of running a criminal enterprise under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), whose members and associates, which included John-Baptiste, conspired to conduct or participate in the enterprise's affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity, namely, extortion, bribery, kidnaping, conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, as well as kidnaping and extortion related crimes under the Virgin Islands Code.

Edwards was also convicted of structuring currency transactions under federal law. Brooks and John-Baptiste were convicted of substantive offenses under the Virgin Islands Code, namely robbery and kidnaping, respectively. Edwards, Brooks and John-Baptiste each face a maximum of 20 years imprisonment and \$250,000 in fines.

Evidence presented at trial established that from 2000 until 2005, Edwards and Brooks in their capacity as VIPD officers, made numerous contacts with drug traffickers requiring them to pay varying sums of cash in exchange for which they would avoid arrest. The evidence further showed that Edwards and Brooks acquired and sold illegal narcotics to local drug traffickers.

Witnesses testified that in 2007, Edwards and Brooks, in their capacity as VIPD officers, forced a person, against his will, to accompany them as they drove around St. Thomas in a police vehicle, forcing him to pay for the return of the vehicle. The kidnaping conviction arose from an incident that occurred in 2008 during which John-Baptiste arrested a person who was subsequently released after Edwards and Brooks received a \$500 cash payment. The evidence presented also showed that in 2009, Edwards and Brooks illegally sold a Virgin Islands driver's licence for \$900.

"This is the result of the hard work and dedication of the Public Corruption Task Force, which includes Virgin Islands police officers and federal law enforcement agents," U.S. Attorney Sharpe said. "It is a sad day when those sworn to uphold the law are found guilty of breaking it." "Those in law enforcement who choose to fight against corruption should not be overshadowed by the crimes of a few. The majority of honest, hardworking law enforcement officers should continue to be a source of pride and encouragement for all people of the U.S. Virgin Islands." said Sharpe.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Kim R. Lindquist, Nolan D. Paige and Kelly B. Lake.